SOME NEW BOOKS.

Russian Armenia.

So far as we know, the most nearly exhaustive work upon the subject which has thus far seen the light is presented in the two volumes collectively entitled *Armenia*, by H. F. B. LYNCH (Longmans). This is a record not only of travel, but also of study. The author has been at pains to bring together, coördinate and sift the researches of his predecessors, and, while already familiar with the contiguous countries, he has personally made two separate journeys in Armenia, the first extending from August, 1893, to March, 1894, and the second from May to September, 1898. The reader of these volumes will concur with Mr. Lynch in thinking that the country and the people which he describes are deserving of the highest interest. It is strange, indeed, that so fine a region should have lain in shadow for so many centuries, and that even the standard works of Greek and Roman writers should display but little knowledge of its characteristic features. What we have here is a storehouse of valuable information gleaned in a seldom-traversed field. It is impossible in a single notice to give an adequate idea of the scope and importance of the book. We shall direct attention at this time only to the first volume, which is allotted to those portions of Armenia that are now under Russian control.

I.

The present area of Russian Armenia closely corresponds with the limits assigned by nature to the more northeasterly of the two extensive sections into which she has parcelled Armenian soil. The Russian frontier is drawn from the coast of the Black Sea along the water-parting of the tributaries to the western bank of the Lower Chorokh, through the peripheral region, and west of the town of Olti, to the Turkish-Armenian border at the Chakhar Dagh. Thence it is taken across the Araxes to the spine of the Aghri or Shatin Dagh, just northwest of the dome of Kuseh Dagh. It follows the spine of the range to the neighborhood of Great Ararat, whose summit it embraces within the dominions of the Czar. From the crest of the Little Ararat, whose southeastern slopes are left to Persia, the Russian frontier reaches across the plain to the right bank of the Araxes, a little below the monastery of Khor Virap. The Araxes forms the boundary between the Russian and Persian empires from this point to near its confluence with the Kur. All of these rivers and mountains will be found depicted on the large-scale map which accompanies the author's first volume. The area of the country comprised within Russian Armenia is about 19,070 square miles.

The solid block of territory over which Russia now rules on the table land of Armenia is neither a new acquisition nor the fruit of a single conquest. At the beginning of the last century she gained a foothold upon the plateau through the voluntary accession of the Georgian kingdom, and its transformation into a Russian province in 1802. This event, the outcome of the folly of the Mussulman powers, that had driven the Christians to despair, was followed by the rapid expansion of the northern empire in these countries, as the result of successful wars. Karabagh was taken from Persia in 1813, and the important khanate of Erivan in 1828; from Turkey, the district of Akhaltsykh in 1829, and the fortress and province of Kars in 1878. Appearing as a deliverer of the Christian peoples, and profiting by their aid, Russia has succeeded in advancing her border beyond the Araxes, and to the threshold of Erzerum, and in establishing herself behind a well-founded frontier, which comprises the venerated mountain of Armenia, as well as the seat of the supreme spiritual government to which the Armenians bow.

The provinces of Russian Armenia constitute a part of the great administrative system of the Caucasus, which is presided over by a single Governor General. Formerly, it was usual to appoint to this important post a Grand Duke, who exercised, not without advantage to the country, a very large measure of personal initiative. At the present day the office is occupied by a nobleman of high rank, but his administration has become much more intimately connected with the bureaucratic machine which is operated from St. Petersburg. He remains, however, the principal civil and military authority in the Caucasus, which consists of no less than twelve governments, and is divided into North Caucasus and Trans-Caucasia. The seven governments of Tiflis, Erivan, Kars, Kutais, Elizabetpol, Baku and Zakatal compose Trans-Caucasia. Their aggregate population in 1897 fell a little short of five millions, to which total the Armenians contributed about a fifth. The other inhabitants are furnished by branches of the Georgian family and by settlers of Tartar race. These elements of the population for the most part occupy the country immediately on the north of the Armenian tablelands. The Caucasus itself, the northern boundary of Trans-Caucasia, contains within its countless recesses a long catalogue of nations whose names it is difficult to pronounce and whose languages are mysterious. The importance of the Armenian element must be measured, not so much by its numerical strength as by its solidarity, compared with the divisions among the peoples beside whom they live. The Armenians are little separated by religious differences; the Roman Catholics are a mere handful amid the compact ranks of the Gregorians, and the Gregorian Church is not only the symbol of national existence but the stronghold of national hopes. The Tartars, who slightly exceed the Armenians in number, are split by the bitter religious antipathies of Sunni and Shiah, while the Georgians, who muster over a million souls, are in a period of transition from their old feudal system to a new and more settled social order The union, moreover, of their Church with the Orthodox Church of Russia has deprived the Georgians of a natural rallying point for the community of sentiment which is based on a consciousness of race pride. Should the Russians become possessed of the Armenian provinces of the Turkish Empire, the most numerous as well as the most solid of the elements of population in Trans-Caucasia will be furnished by the Armenian race.

The Armenians being a commercial and industrial, as well as agricultural, people, have spread themselves outside the natural limits of their country, attracted to the growing centres of industry upon its confines. They contribute a valuable and expanding element to the urban population. It is only, however, when one going southward has crossed the mountains which separate their highlands from the rest of Trans-Caucasia, that one becomes conscious of treading upon Armenian soil. Throughout its extension from Akhalkalaki and Alexandropol on the northeast to Egin and Kharput on the southwest, that elevated stage of the Asiatic tableland, which may be still called Armenia, bears the imprint of the individuality of the Armenian peoples to a greater degree than that of any other race. Throughout this high plateau there is scarcely a remote valley which does not attract a band of pilgrims to worship in the monasteries which date from the times of the Kings of Armenia, and keep alive the story of its past. The fertile ground is, for the most part, tilled by an Armenian peasantry whose burrows, resembling large ant-hills, are scarcely perceptible in the scene. All the machinery of whatever civilization the land may possess is provided by Armenians. Over the whole area of the Armenian tableland, as it is delimited in the present work, these people are encountered in nearly double the numbers of any other race. The language which you most often hear is the somewhat harsh Armenian tongue; the legends and historical memories which attach to the great works of nature have, for the most part, an Armenian origin.

II.

The stronghold of the Armenians, the locality in which they are most numerous, is the rich country through which the Arpa Chai (grain river) flows on its way to join the middle course of the Araxes, now called the Aras. There is situated the fortress and modern town of Alexandropol, which is inhabited almost exclusively by Armenians, and there are placed, a little further south, the remains of the ancient city of Ani, the deserted site of which still testifies to the state and splender of their kings. The upland plains about Akhalkalaki on the north are dotted with Armenian villages while the valley of the Araxes on the south from Kagyzman to Erivan, and especially in the district of Edgmiatsin, contains a considerable Armenian population. The town and district of Novo-Bayaset on the western shore of Lake Sevan, is for the greater part Armenian. On the other hand, the eastern portion of the Araxes Valley, beginning from the town of Ordubad, is held in large numbers by the Tartars, who run the Armenians close in the extensive and important area which is covered by the Government of Erivan. Mr. Lynch reminds us that the Armenian population of the Russian provinces has been considerably augumented by emigration from Turkey and Persia. It is computed that no fewer than ten thousand families from the district of Erzerum followed the Russian army out of Turkey in 1829, and numbers of their countrymen—it is said, no fewer than forty thousand—had already accompanied the same force from the frontier districts of Persia when it retired from Tabriz on the conclusion of the peace of Turkomanchai.

Next to the Armenians, the most numerous element in the population is contributed, as we have said, by the Tartars, who extend from the Persian frontier up the Valley of the Araxes, and cover with their settlements the eastern section of the plateau region, and the whole of the Karabagh district. The Tartars of Trans-Caucasia represent a section of those warriors of Turkish race who, from the time of the appearance of the Seljuks down to the end of the eighteenth century, were driven to this country by political conditions from the northern provinces of Persia, that is to say, from Azerbaijan and from the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea. Their language is still the lingua franca of the territory between the Caucasus and the Armenian plateau. Within the area of Russian Armenia, they belong almost entirely to the Shiah sect, and, besides sharing the religion of Persia, they contain an admixture of Persian blood. It is not so long ago that their seats in Armenia formed a Persian khanate, and were administered by Persian sirdars; the rich families that flourished during that period are still the owners of extensive gardens and live on the proceeds of their lands. In the humbler walks of urban life they are distinguished by their skill in all the methods of working mud which are practised in the East; they are plasterers, wallmakers, expert in the construction of irrigation works; most of the little tradesmen, hucksters and fruitsellers are Tartars, and so are many of the gardeners and drivers of carts. In the country they have passed from the nomadic stage, and are prosperous tillers of the ground. In the town of Erivan, where their numbers equal those of the Armenians, many of the most thriving business houses are in Tartar hands. The Tartars have availed themselves but little, however, of the opportunities of education which the Russian Government has placed within their reach, and Mr. Lynch deems it safe to prophesy that, unless a radical change in this respect be soon effected, they will be edged out by the Armenians, and will diminish in numbers year by year.

The remaining peoples native to Russian Armenia upon which our author bestows a glance, are the Kurds, the Greeks, the Turks, the Georgians and the Karapapakhs. The Kurds within Russian territory have not yet abandoned their nomadic habits; they are found as far north as the country about Batum, but their principal pasture grounds are on the Turkish frontier and in Karabagh. The total number of Kurds in Trans-Caucasia is given as one hundred thousand. The Greeks have several villages, principally in the Government of Kars; those which our author saw were prosperous and the gay dresses and trinkets of the women betokened a somewhat higher stage of comfort than that which is usual in the country considered as a whole. These Greeks speak Turkish and are learning Russian; their versatile genius enables them to change their nationality easily. They are excellent miners and road engineers; the fine chaussee which has recently been completed up the valley of the Toporevan River to Akhalkalaki was constructed by Greek workmen. The Georgians, included in the area under review, are found in the valley of the Kur. In many places the race has received such a large admixture of Turkish blood that the inhabitants, although classed as Georgians, call themselves Turks, and are in religion Mohammedan. In their villages Mr. Lynch found much discontent with the existing order, and outward signs of disintegration and decay. The Turks proper are encountered almost exclusively in the Government of Kars, which is also the seat of a hybrid tribe called Karapapakhs, or "Black Caps," so named from the black lambskin caps which they wear.

III.

If the social condition of the country be considered, no circumstance will be found more striking than the complete separation of one race from another. There is an entire absence of fusion of the different elements, although they live side by side. Cases, indeed, exist, both in the Russian and in the Turkish provinces of Armenia, where from an expectation of advantage or by compulsion, the people of a particular district have adopted the Mussulman religion during periods of Mussulman persecution, and have become by intermarriage and closer intercourse, absorbed into the dominant race. On the part of onlookers, however, such examples by converting prejudices into animosities, have only aggravated the differences to which separation is due. When Russia appeared on the scene, it might have been expected that, at least in the case of the Christians, a disposition to draw together would make itself felt. As a matter of fact, a reverse tendency has been observed. To the old religious breaches has been added a new barrier to coalescence, namely the Russian orthodox Church. In the case of a marriage between a Russian sectary and an Armenian and, apparently also, in the case of a marriage between a Gregorian Armenian and a Protestant Armenian, the children of the mixed union are required by Russian law to be brought up in the Russian orthodox faith. It makes no difference that neither of the parents professes that faith. The result of this regulation has been that the old heterogeneous collection of Christian sects has been increased by two more species of schismatics, the Molokans and the Dukhoborsky, which, expelled from Russia sought refuge in Armenia. Upon both of these sects is riveted isolation from their neighbors, as they have no alternative but to educate their children in a creed and religious system which they abhor.

Under such circumstances but little has been effected by the Russian settlers toward raising the standards of living which previously prevailed in their adopted country. Mr Lynch deems the presence of artificial barriers regrettable, inasmuch as the sectaries just named had belonged to the flower of Russian peasantry. They are pronounced superior to the Armenians in moral force, and their methods of agriculture, were they generally followed, would produce an economic revolution. Up to the present time, however, their example has been thrown away. Their neat stone houses, spacious hearths, ploughs and field implements, have not incited the Armenians to forsake their ancestral habits, to improve the means of cultivation and to emerge from their unhealthy burrows into the light and comfort of glass windows and solid walls of stone. This barrenness of result is partly attributed to the manner in which the emigration from Russia took place. Hunted out of their native country, the peasants came in whole village communities, with their women and children, and their household goods. Their new settlements were grouped together and rendered self-sufficient so that neither the necessities nor the inducements of social intercourse drew them away from their own circles.

IV.

Passing to the political side of his subject, our author describes the system of government under which the various peoples collected in Russian Armenia live. The presence of discontent in certain quarters may be regarded as the inevitable outcome of the change of rulers. The Mussulman supporters of the old Turkish dominion share with their neighbors of Turkish origin the humiliation of a fallen state. Their Turkish sympathies and connections excite, on the one hand, the suspicions of the Russian Government, and, on the other, dispose them to yield to the lightest pressure and to cross the border into Turkish Armenia. Even the Armenians, who have been a mainstay to Russia, both in her Persian and her Turkish wars, whose lands have been swept by the tide of battle and who can recall the memory of conflicts which extended even to the walls of their sanctuary, the cloister of Edgmiatsin, are inclined to temper their sentiments of gratitude with the consciousness of the services which they have rendered, services which many among them may be disposed to regard as having resulted only in the imposition of a fresh and more burdensome yoke. North of the tableland the Georgian races, whose kingdom, harassed by Mohammedan peoples, was driven to seek outside assistance, have not yet forgotten the disappointment of the hopes which many among them had cherished, that Russian intervention might assume the form of a protectorate rather than that of a complete absorption of the Georgian element into the Russian state. In Mr. Lynch's opinion, however, such regrets and disillusionments do but represent the familiar sequel to the constitution of empire upon a new soil; under such circumstances human nature is more prone to count the loss than to recognize the gain. It is certain that, since Russia completed her subjugation of the Caucasus, order and peace have been given to the country, and life and property are safe for the first time during a long period. No longer are Georgian children sold into slavery, and a middle class is forming among a people whose traditional relation to one another was that of noble and serf. If now in Northern Armenia the Armenian peasant gathers for himself the crops which he has sown, and the restless Kurd consults his safety by a respect for the law, it is to Russia that the people owe deliverance from the license and anarchy of former years.

Mr. Lynch testifies that, had the Russian Government confined its energies to the task of maintaining public order in a formerly distracted country, it would have received the unstinted gratitude of the Armenians, until, in the maturity of time, they should have learned to walk unaided, and themselves to cope with such unruly elements as might still resist the yoke of law. The Russian Government, however, was not content to confine itself to the rôle of guardian, but desired to bring about as rapidly as possible the assimilation of the Armenians. The Russians themselves are not a commercial people, and would willingly see the Armenians conduct the commerce of their native country and develop its vast resources, but only on one condition, were they prepared to encourage such activity: the condition was that their new subjects should become Russians, and that the newly acquired territory should be joined to the Russian Empire, not only by the slender thread of annexation, but by the abiding tie of a common patriotism founded on a community of sentiment. The Armenian, in a word, was to sink his individuality and resign his initiative into Muscovite hands. He was made to understand that he must imbue himself with the ideas which his new rulers had prepared for him, although these might be opposed to the tendencies and the capacities with which he had been endowed. In such a prospect the Armenian can recognize nothing to admire and much to fear. He sees the more capable races either driven from the Russian Empire or made the subject of incessant jealousy and antipathy, rather than of increasing respect. He feels the grip of an organization which is founded on European methods, and commands all the resources which those methods provide, but he distrusts the hand which wields these weapons, and he is indifferent to the objects to which they are directed. Even the material results of such a system leave him little to hope for beyond what he has attained.

The resources of the country still lie dormant, and the Government seems to lack either the means or the will to turn them to account. The Armenian sees the rich forests of the peripheral region, which might yield a considerable revenue in return for an outlay comparatively small, left unexploited while shiploads of wood are entering the ports to supply the requirements of the oil industry. That industry itself he sees promoted by foreign capital in Russian guise, although the jealousy of all foreign capital has closed the door to its beneficent action in the provinces of Russian Armenia. Only a single military railway traverses the table land, and there is scarcely a wagon road upon it, except such roads as are rendered necessary by the exigencies of the army. The two principal towns are Alexandropol and Erivan, yet the road which joins them makes a colossal circuit by the northern shore of Lake Sevan, where it meets the main avenue of traffic between Tiflis and Erivan. In Erivan itself, the chief town of a district where capital might be turned to the greatest advantage, it is impossible or difficult to find a foreign newspaper, while the industrial skill of the advanced races of Europe is not represented by a single foreign enterprise, or, so far as our author could learn, by a single foreign man of business or industrial employee. Persons who knew the country well assured Mr. Lynch that, from the viewpoint of irrigation, an important requirement in a land which suffers from want of rain, Russian Armenia had gone back since the time of the Persians, who are experts in the art. Our author is inclined to think that much of the backwardness of the provinces visited by him should be ascribed to excessive centralization in the Russian capital, a centralization exemplified in the fact that at the present day the smallest projects are referred to St. Petersburg, and considered with reference to the economic policy which governs the empire as a whole.

In our author's judgment a people whose commercial activity has brought them into contact with the most progressive races of Europe, and whose natural instinct renders them eager to assimilate Western thought, can scarcely be blamed if they chafe under a system which assumes to formulate the opinions they shall hold, and to select the books which they shall read and which subjects every action of their daily life to an inquisitorial control. Such methods are the manifestations of a settled and uniform plan. Little by little, as all danger on the side of the Mussulman States has disappeared, the Russian Government has deemed it opportune to apply more drastic processes, and to impose upon the newest of their adopted children a fuller measure of the disciplinary régime. On their side the Armenians have shown no disposition to adopt Russian ways of thought. The more severe the pressure the more have they writhed and twisted; at the present moment, indeed they are lying quietly with broken wings. According to Mr. Lynch, their situation is cruel in the extreme. From the Turkish provinces they are beaten up toward the Russian frontier by bands of predatory Kurds. Should they manage to reach the coveted asylum, they are caught in the meshes of an impervious network; they are sorted and sifted by a swarm of active petty officials, the police of the districts, the police of the towns, the political police. Camps are instituted where the great majority of emigrants are detained at pleasure, to be returned on the first opportunity to their rifled homes. The repetition of this process is more effective in decimating the Armenian people than are any massacres. It is pointed out, however, that the amelioration, if not the removal of such harsh conditions lies to some extent in their own hands. "Accept our system," the Armenians are told "follow the Georgians, and seek spiritual and political salvation within the bosom of the Russian Church-State." Our author has no doubt that in that event the whole weight of the great Russian Empire would be thrown into the scale for the Armenians. Will not a people so sorely tried soon submit to the prescribed conditions? Mr Lynch says that he has put the question to all the Armenians with whom he has had opportunities of intercourse, but the answer has been invariably in the negative. Many Armenians, it seems, go so far as to profess openly a preference for the Turkish Government. They put the matter in the form of an antithesis. They have simply a choice they say, between two oppressions, one physical and spasmodic, the other moral and systematic. It is not the first time in their history that to Armenians has been offered the alternative of slavery in body or slavery in mind. A remnant may be absorbed; but the majority will follow their destiny, will wander forth, and, perhaps, disappear.

V.

Mr. Lynch suggests that the reader who knows the Armenians only from his unpleasant experience of an Armenian dragoman picked up in the Levant, may not be disposed to view the threatened ruin of that people with feelings of keen regret. For himself, however, coming to the subject free from any prepossessions but with the lessons of extensive travel in the other countries west of India freshly imprinted on his mind, he confesses to exactly contrary sentiments. The fact is recalled that we are living in a time of startling changes in Asia, we are witnesses of one of those great waves dashing from Europe upon Asia, the antecedent tide-marks of which have all but vanished. We are further reminded that the Asiatic with all his debility is not the African; he is our father, from whose lips we received our first lesson; and his old age, become almost childlike, contains the germs of rejuvenescence. Mr. Lynch sees in the Armenians a people peculiarly adapted to be the intermediaries of the new dispensation between Europe and Asia. They profess the Christian religion, they are familiar with some of the best Western ideals, and they assimilate each new product of European culture with an ability and thoroughness which no other race between India and the Mediterranean has given any evidence of being able to rival. These capacities they have made manifest under the greatest disadvantage, to wit: as a subject race ministering to the needs of Mussulman masters. They know well that with every advance of true civilization, they are sure to rise, as they will certainly fall at each relapse. It would, indeed, be folly to expect that they should not have suffered in character by the menial pursuits which during a thousand years of subjection they have been constrained to follow. When we recall that they have been *Rayas*, exploited by races most often their inferiors in intellect, we cannot be surprised at the results, and should rather wonder that their defects are not more pronounced.

Even as it is, Mr. Lynch bears witness that the Armenians are possessed of virtues with which they are seldom credited. The fact that in Turkey they are rigorously precluded from bearing arms has led superficial observers to regard them as cowards. Our author thinks that a different judgment might be meted out, were they placed on an equality in this respect with their enemies, the Kurds. At all events, when they have had an opportunity, they have not been slow to display martial qualities, both in the domain of the highest strategy and in that of personal prowess. The victorious commander-in-chief for Russia in her Asiatic campaign of 1877 was an Armenian from the district of Lori, Loris Melikoff. During the same campaign the most brilliant General of division in the Russian Army was an Armenian, Terdukasoff. The war correspondent of the London *Times* recorded that "the manner in which Terdukasoff handled his men at Taghir on the 16th of June, 1877, when with eight battallions he thoroughly defeated the twelve which Mahomet Pasha opposed to him; the stubborn resistance with which he checked Mukhtar Pasha's onslaught on June 21 at Eshek Khaliass; the gallant retreat which his half-divison effected in front of Ahmed Pasha's twenty-three battalions; and, finally, his dashing flank march from Igdyr to Bayazid, and the relief of that place in front of two Turkish corps, both superior to him in numbers, stamp him a General of division of the first class Had the Czar many more like him, this war would have been completed a month ago." Again the gallant young staff officer, Tarnaloff, who planned and led the desperate attack on the Azizi fort in front of Erzerum, was an Armenian, and paid for his daring with his life. At the present day the frontier police engaged in controlling the Kurds of the border is recruited from among Armenians. Mr. Lynch deems these examples sufficient to nail to the counter an inveterate lie from which the Armenians have suffered more, at least in British estimation, than from any other supposed defect.

Our author, who, it should be remembered, speaks from first-hand observation, says that were he asked what characteristics distinguish the Armenians from other Orientals he should be disposed to lay most emphasis on a quality known to us in popular speech as *grit*. It is this quality to which they owe their preservation as a people, and they are not surpassed in this respect by any European nation. Their intellectual capacities are supported by a solid foundation of character, and, unlike the Greeks, but like the Germans, they are averse to superficial methods; they become absorbed in their tasks, and plumb them deep. There is no race in the nearer East more quick of learning than are the Persians; yet our author suggests that, should you be visited by a Persian gentleman accompanied by his Armenian man of business, you might do well to try the experiment of taking a book down from your shelves, preferably with illustrations, and hand it to them after a passing reference. It will be found that the Persian will look at the pictures, which he may praise. The Armenian, on the other hand, will devour the text of the book and at each pause in the conversation you will see him poring over it with knitted brows. This tendency to concentration is naturally accompanied by forethought and balance; it is these qualities which have given the Armenian his preëminence in commercial affairs. He is not less clever than the Greek, but he sees further and, although ingrained with the petty vices of all Oriental traders, the Armenian merchant is quick to appreciate the advantages of fair dealing when they are commended by the conditions under which his vocation is pursued. It seems that amid the heterogeneous urban populations of the Balkans the proportion of Armenians implicated in bankruptcy is comparatively low. If the fact does not attest the greater integrity of Armenians it at least indicates their power to resist an immediate temptation, and their promptitude in recognizing the pecuniary value of commercial stability.

In order, however, to estimate this people at anything like their true worth, Mr. Lynch warns us that we should study them not in the Balkans, or in the Levant, where corruption is widespread, but in the Russian provinces of Armenia. Here they have turned to account most successfully the interval between the period, when the sword of Russia was the sword of the deliverer, and the present state of things, when the principles by which her rulers are inspired are those of pan-orthodoxy and pan-Slavism. So much surprised was our author by the results achieved and by the contrast offered between the progress of this newly emancipated population and the stagnation and retrogression of their neighbors of different nationalities spread over the wide area of the nearer Asia that, without any fixed previous purpose, he determined to pursue the study of the Armenians further, and to extend his journey into Turkish territory. What was the spectacle that so much impressed him in Russian Armenia? He found that in every trade and profession, in business and in the Government services the Armenian was without a rival, and in full possession of the field. He equips the postal service by which one travels, and, if one is fortunate enough to encounter an inn, the landlord will be an Armenian. Most of the villages in which one sojourns are inhabited by a brawny Armenian peasantry. In the towns, if the local Governor attaches to a traveller's service the head of the local police, that officer will be a stalwart Armenian in Russian uniform. Through his aid the traveller will find a lodging or a shady garden in which to erect his tents.

If one remark on the way some well-built edifice that aspires to architectural design, it will turn out to be the work of an Armenian builder from Alexandropol. In that city itself, where the Armenians are most numerous, the love of building, which was a marked characteristic of their forefathers, has blossomed again under relatively genial circumstances; a spacious cathedral and several large churches stand among new stone houses fronted with ambitious façades. In Erivan, each tolerably rich merchant has lodged himself in an agreeable villa, the Italian architecture of which rises from amid the shade of poplars and willows and fruit trees. The excellent wine met with in Erivan is made according to the newest methods by an Armenian, who investigated for two years in Germany the most modern appliances of the wine-making industry in Europe. The financial transactions of the country are in the hands of Armenian bankers. The skilled workmen, such as jewellers, watchmakers and carpenters, are Armenians. Even the officer of mounted frontier police, whose long association with the wilder elements of the population—Kurds and robbers—has lent him the appearance of a chief of brigands, will bear an Armenian name. The large majority of the people do not speak Russian, or speak it very imperfectly. Were it not, indeed, for the fact that the Governors and chief police officials of large districts are Russians, and that Cossacks and Russian regular soldiers may be seen here and there, the traveller would not suspect that he was in a Russian province, and would go his way with composure until rudely awakened by some abrupt collision with the Russian bureaucratic system. In fine the Armenian has edged out the Russian, and, if the conquests of peace could be unhindered, he would ultimately rule in the land.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the Armenian's Oriental imagination has been wrought upon to an imprudent extent. The dream of a revived Armenian kingdom has fired the national enthusiasm, which the perusal of historical records has fed. The examples furnished in eastern Europe have seemed to justify the vision. In his second volume, which deals with the Turkish provinces, our author undertakes to show the falseness of such analogies. Meanwhile, he points out that the hope of an independent Armenian State, could it be realized in a remote future, would not appeal to all minds alike. Many discern a danger to human progress in the creation of small States. The national sentiment would be placed by them among the already realized ideals upon which, as our civilization widens, it is necessary to build a higher superstructure. The magnitude of the conflict which would ensue, should any of the greater nations engage in war, acts as a preventive to ambitions which the small State is inclined to indulge on the least pretence. The gratification of such ambitions causes bad administrations, and ends in bankruptcy. Moreover, the people of a little country can enjoy but few of the advantages which are offered by a great empire. Such considerations have much weight, yet they scarcely indicate a solution of the Armenian problem. The Armenian, who should be a convert to such views, might reasonably ask in what quarter he should look for profitable assimilation. The Turkish Empire will not even protect him, and massacres its Armenian subjects; should he turn to Russia, he sees no prospects of material advantage which would enable him to rise above the economic stage to which he has already attained, while his surrender to Russian ideals could only be effected, in his opinion, at the price of moral and intellectual annihilation. Confronted with such an outlook, he seeks refuge within himself; and, when he consults his more sober perceptions, he labors in silence, and without ostentation, to supply the requirements which his race still recognizes; to raise the peasant from his present degradation, to purify the church and to promote the interests of his richer neighbors in works for the common good. These are the legitimate ambitions which, however commonplace, are certain of attainment, and which, whatever be the revolutions of politics, will establish the Armenian's right to influence the history of his country as constituting one of the only stable native elements of progress in the nearer East.

VI.

A chapter of Mr. Lynch's book is devoted to Edgmiatsin, the religious capital of Armenia, and to the Armenian Church. Here will be found an interesting outline of the history of Armenian Christianity. It was some time before the persecution of the Christians under Diocletian (A. D. 284-305) that Tiridates, the King of Armenia, was converted by a propagandist, subsequently known as St. Gregory, who became the mentor of the monarch, both in religious and secular affairs. Thus it came to pass that Christianity was adopted as the religion of the State in Armenia some thirty years before it triumphed in the West through the decisive action at the Milvian Bridge (A. D. 312) and over 100 years before Theodosius the First issued his edicts against the practice of paganism. In spite of frequent ebullitions of paganism the institutions established by St. Gregory, known to his fellow countrymen as The Illuminator, were never jeoparded by a decisive relapse. The religion which he invested with all the authority of the State became inextricably interwoven with the self-consciousness of the Armenian nation and derived from their inveterate obstinacy or admirable heroism a stability which stiffened the more it was threatened from without. From the outset the keystone of the ecclesiastical edifice was, as it now is, the person of the Katholikos. Our author is unable to find among Christian organizations any counterpart of this high office. Beside it that of the King seems mere tinsel. The title itself, indeed, was unpretentious, designating as it did among the Christians of the East an Archbishop with plenary powers, such as were needed in countries remote from the hierarchical centre. It is applied by the earliest extant authorities to St. Gregory; and so moderate were the claims of his successor, Faustus, that he coined the superlative Katholikos of Katholikoi to express the conceded superior dignity of the metropolitan of Cæsarea. Whatever grade, however, in the hierarchy of the Christian Church may have been assigned to him by his clerical colleagues in other lands, the position occupied in his native country by the Katholikos of Armenia was one of extraordinary glamour. The office was hereditary in the family of the Illuminator; and that family had been endowed with territories extending over fifteen provinces, and comprising several princely residences. The pontifical palace was at Astishat, in the neighborhood of the mother church of Armenia and of the Chapel of St. John the Baptist and of St. Athenogenes.

When the descendants of St. Gregory were unwilling to sustain the burden of the office of Katholikos, it was entrusted to some prominent cleric of the church at Astishat, while the unworthy heirs pursued the vocation of arms or the attractions of pleasure. It was customary for the scions of the Illuminator to marry into the King's family, and to them were accorded many of the honors due to royalty alone. As often as the King provoked the censure of the Katholikos, spiritual castigation was unflinchingly enforced. In the case of a vacancy of the pontifical chair, owing to failure in the line of renunciation on the part of the heir, it was not the priesthood who chose the successor, but the King, the nobles and the army. In this respect the office was identified with the existing institutions of the country, and our author suggests that it may have been modelled upon that of the high priests among the polytheists and the Jews. Two descendants of the Illuminator, one in the fourth, the other in the fifth century, added new lustre to the institution. Nerses the First introduced the refinements of hierarchical government; Sahak the Great gave to the people an alphabet of their own. The throne of the successors of Tiridates crumbled away in the course of about a century from the death of the first Christian monarch, whereas that of the successors of St. Gregory has weathered the storms of sixteen centuries and remains a solid and impressive monument at the present day.

The national character of the Armenian Church is mainly derived from the institutions of St. Gregory; but it was Nerses, his direct descendant, who brought it into line with the Church of the Roman Empire in the sphere of internal development and discipline. The family likeness which it presents to the neighboring Greek Church is largely due to this prelate. The monastery is still the pivot of the ecclesiastical organization; it was Nerses, the contemporary, and perhaps the disciple of St. Basil of Cæsarea who spread cloisters and convents broadcast over the land. A single rule was established for the several orders of monks; and the laity were bidden to observe certain sanitary regulations, among which was included abstention from animal food. The poor and the sick were lodged in hospices, and were not allowed to beg; a humane enactment provided that their neighbors should bring them food to their public or private dwellings. In each district was founded a school for the instruction of the people in the Greek and Syriac languages.

The death of Nerses, which occurred not later than A. D. 374—he was poisoned by the Armenian King—marks an epoch in the history of the Armenian Church. On the one hand its emoluments were considerably curtailed—on the other—a fact which had far-reaching consequences—it was severed definitely from the Church of the Roman Empire. It is evident that Nerses failed to gauge correctly the temper of his countrymen; it was the defect of his undoubted virtues that he endeavored to go too far and to accomplish too much. The reaction from his severe ordinances enabled the King to proceed unhindered in the work of overthrowing the structure which his victim had reared. The hospices were abolished, the convents were destroyed and their inmates given over to persecution. Moreover, the greater portion of the lands bestowed upon the Church by Tiridates were appropriated by the State. Out of each group of seven domains belonging to the former institution, the revenues of five were allotted to the Treasury. It cannot be doubted that popular support was forthcoming for the revolution which the monarch initiated in the relations with the Church of the Roman Empire At all periods the Armenians have approved a national policy and preferred to perish rather than unite with their neighbors. A Bishop of the House of Albianus, a rival of St. Gregory's family and always obsequious to the throne, was invested with the vacant primacy. The consent of the Metropolitan of Cæsarea was not even asked for, nor was the Bishop despatched to the capital of the province of Cappadocia for consecration in accordance with the usual custom. The defiance thus offered by the Armenian sovereign provoked resentment on the part of St. Basil. The right of consecrating Bishops was taken away from the Katholikos and to him was only left the prerogative of blessing bread at the royal court. The outcome of this exhibition of temper upon both sides was a bitter conflict in the Armenian Church itself. The clergy were divided into followers of the King and of the House of Albianus, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, those who held to the necessity of consecration in Cæsarea and to allegiance to the House of Gregory. The subsequent lapse of the greater part of Armenia under Persian influence promoted the policy initiated by King Pap; and when, toward the close of the century, the chair was again occupied by a descendant of St. Gregory, the link with Cæsarea was not restored.

VII.

As time went on, several causes contributed to widen the breach with the Church of the Roman Empire. A Persian occupation and the ultimate extinction of the Arsakid dynasty to which Tiridates and his descendants had belonged were no small factors in an estrangement from Byzantine influence which the policy of Persia lost no occasion of furthering. The invention by Mesrop of an Armenian alphabet imposed by the Persian Government as a political device, and the institution of a school of translators during the pontificate of the son of Nerses, Isaac the Great (A. D. 390-439), constituted elements which, while they worked for the attachment of the Armenians to Greek culture, and for the wider propagation of Christianity, were yet calculated to foster the strong proclivities of the people toward complete religious independence. Finally, the peculiar genius of the Armenian nation imprinted a stamp upon the dogma of their Church which was not the stamp sanctioned by the Church of the Empire. The Council of Chalcedon (A. D. 451) at which the Armenians were not represented, proclaimed the so-called doctrine of two natures in the following words: "Christ according to His Godhead is of one nature with the Father, while, according to His humanity, He is, apart from sin, of one nature with us. This one and the same Christ is recognized in two natures indissolubly united, but yet distinct." In a synod held at Edgmiatsin fourteen centuries ago, the Armenian Church emphatically rejected the dogma formulated at Chalcedon. The Armenians, therefore, differ, both with the Greek and with the Roman Church, in their interpretation of the mystery of Christology. They will not hear of two natures. They hold that in Christ there is one person and one nature, one will and one energy; their liturgy presents their dogma in the following words: "O God, holy God, mighty God, everlasting God, *who wast crucified for us.*" At the same time, they deny and denounce the teaching of Eutyches, protagonist against the Nestorians. Eutyches held that the body of Christ is not to be regarded as of one nature with ours; the Armenians maintain that God became man in the fullest sense.

Our author is disposed to think that his Christology embodied the sentiments of the people; but he points out that it had the effect of estranging them, not only from the Church of the Empire, but also from the great body of their fellow Christians within the Persian dominions, for at the synod of Beth Lapat (A. D. 483 or 484) the old Christian Church of Persia welcomed into its bosom the flying forces of Nestorianism, and adopted the Nestorian confession. The Georgians, it is true, followed for a time the lead of the Armenians, with whom their Church was directly connected. These allies broke away, however, before the close of the sixth century, and went over to the teaching of Chalcedon. As the centuries rolled by, these various breaches became wider, and they are still marked features in the Christianity of the East. Martyrdom and political enslavement were alternatives which were accepted gladly in lieu of a compromise of dogmatic differences. When the Emperor Heraclius visited Armenia after replacing the Cross in the churches of Jerusalem, the Armenian soldiers refused to camp with his troops. In the middle ages, when the Sassanid Kings of Persia had been forgotten, and when the caliphs, their successors, were in turn approaching their doom, the stubborn Armenian hierarchy insisted upon baptizing babes a second time if the ceremony had been performed by a Greek priest. All attempts to effect a union between the Armenian Church on the one hand and the Greek or Latin Church on the other have failed. The more attractive were the offers of the Greeks, the more bitter became the animosity exhibited by the Armenians. The Popes have had no better success. They have added costly objects of art to the treasury at Edgmiatsin; the result of their overtures is a blank. Although such conduct sacrificed the cause of civilization in Armenia, our author thinks that it should be regarded with pity rather than with anger. The Armenians have fought at all hazards to preserve their individuality, and the bulk of the nation have perished in the attempt. The lesson taught by history is that no people and no form of Christianity will succeed in assimilating the Armenians, if it endeavors to deflect them from their own opinions, and to preclude them from working out their own salvation in their own way.

Should the reader think that in the chapter just reviewed Mr. Lynch deals too largely in ancient history, the excuse offered by him is that the situation remains much the same at the present day. The existing attitude of the Armenian and Greek churches toward one another may be still defined in the words used in the twelfth century, when it was said that the Greeks thanked God that they were not like the Armenians, and the Armenians thanked God that they were not like the Greeks. Our author tells us that, apart from the dogma and ritual, the contemporary traveller will notice a conspicuous difference between the Greek and the Armenian churches. You will not find oikons in Armenian houses, while no Russian house is without them. As regards the Church of Rome, the dogmatic breach is even wider than that which exists in the case of the Greek Church; in common with the latter, the Armenian Church rejects the Filioque. Of course, the Armenian community denies the infallibility of the Pope.

VIII.

In his eighteenth chapter the author undertakes an excursion into the mediæval history of Armenia. His twofold aim is to narrate the principal events in the annals of Ani, the mediæval Armenian capital, and, at the same time, to outline the wider records of the Armenian kingdom of the Middle Ages. He has found that a study of that neglected subject explains the present condition of the Armenians, and conducts us to the threshold of our own era. The natural development of the Armenian people was suddenly arrested by the Seljuk conquests, and its ablest representatives sought new homes. Some stout spirits established themselves in the mountains of Cilicia, where they founded a petty kingdom (the so-called Lesser Armenia) which endured for nearly 300 years (A. D. 1080-1375). The obstinacy of their race was again exemplified in the long resistance of this colony to the spiritual guidance of the Popes of Rome. The friends of the Crusaders, they were at length overwhelmed by the Turks, who suppressed the dynasty. Their descendants, however, still maintained themselves about their adopted seats, secure in their mountain fastnesses. Another remarkable outcome of the dispersal of the Armenian people after the Seljuk conquest of their native land was the immigration of the inhabitants of Ani to Poland, Moldavia and Galicia, to Astrakhan on the northern shore of the Caspian, and thence to the Crimea. Many of these far-distant colonies have endured to the present day. Some among them were permitted to retain their own laws, and the jurisprudence of the mediæval Armenian Kings figures in the code of the colony of Lemberg, which was administered by Armenian notables, with the sanction of the Polish sovereigns and which has been preserved to our own time.

Summing up his account of the ruins of Ani our author says that a lesson of large import, transcending the sphere of the history of architecture, may be derived from a visit to the capital of the mediæval Bagratid dynasty, and from the study of the evidence of a vanished civilization which is lavished upon the traveller within her walls. The monuments of Ani throw a strong light upon the character of the Armenian people, and bring into the foreground important features of Armenian history. They leave no doubt upon the minds that this people may be included in the small number of races that have shown themselves susceptible of the highest culture. They exhibit the Armenians as able and sympathetic intermediaries between, on the one hand, the civilization of the Byzantine Empire, the heir of that of Rome, and, on the other hand, the civilization of the nations of the East. They testify to the tragic suddenness with which the development of the race was arrested at a time when they had attained a measure of political freedom and when their capacities, thus favored, were beginning to bear fruit. After the fall of Ani the Armenian architects subserved the tastes of their Mussulman masters, and during the long centuries which have elapsed since the Seljuk conquests the genius of their countrymen has been exploited by the semi-barbarous peoples of Asia, while their abilities and character have progressively declined and become debased.

M. W. H.